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ABSTRACT

After a brief historical background of community college functions, the author develops a fictional model, Alpha College, to demonstrate the organization and operation of a continuing education program. The following hypothetical examples are offered: general course offerings, sociology for nurses, industrial drafting, informal course in real estate, and a program for lawyers. (CA)

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ALPHA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A MODEL TO DEMONSTRATE THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF A CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

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ALPHA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A MODEL TO DEMONSTRATE THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF

A CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

A review of the community college literature indicates that Continuing Education/Adult Education/Community Services was recognized as a function of the community college in the early 1930's. In his book, The Community College, Jesse Bogue notes that in The Junior College Movement by Koos, published in 1925, there is no mention, either in the Table of Contents or in the index, of Continuing Education/Adult Education/Community Services.[1]

In 1932, a special committee appointed by the Governor of California, operating under a grant from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, included in its report a definitive statement identifying Continuing Education/Adult Education/Community Services as one of the functions of the California Junior College System.[2] The statement read as follows:

> "The function of adult education may be associated with the junior college as a supplementary service. It concerns not the regular full-time student body but the citizens of the community, both men and women, who have terminated their formal schooling and wish to advance their self-education with

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[1]Bogue, Jesse Parker, The Community College (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950) p. 207.

[2]Mann, George C. and J. Wilson Getsinger, "Development of Adult Education in California," Bulletin of the California State Department of Education, Vol. xxvi, p. 21, December 1957.

> the stimulus, direction and aid which the present-day organization of adult or extension education provides. Junior colleges are local community institutions and may well be cultural community centers."[3]

Another indication of the 1930's as the entrance point for Continuing Education/Adult Education/Community Service into the community colleges is provided by a study done by Martorana in 1947 for the American Association of Junior Colleges. This study indicates that almost four-fifths of the adult education programs being offered in 1947 were inaugurated after 1934.[4]

DEFINITIONS:

James Thornton, in The Community Junior College, has characterized the evolution of the community college in three stages. The first stage he refers to as "education for transfer" and the second as "occupational programs". The third stage he calls the "community college concept" and explains that the junior college cannot be considered a community college until it has added adult education and community services.

It seems appropriate at this time to define clearly what is meant by Continuing Education/Adult Education/Community Services, if for no other reason than to dispense with such an unwieldy designation.

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[3]Bogue, op. cit., pp. 208-209.

[4]Martorana, S.V., "Status of Adult Education in Junior Colleges," Junior College Journal, pp. 322-331, February 1948, p. 327.

Many authors in the field do not use the term "continuing education" at all, but instead refer to "adult education". At one time, "adult education" meant just that - providing education for mature individuals who were taking courses and attending lectures, but who had long since terminated their formal education activity. A good example of this is the Chautauqua, which was organized primarily to train Sunday School teachers for the Methodist Church and was later broadened to include many cultural and educational activities.[5] The Chautauqua granted no credits nor was it a compulsory program. This important aspect of volunteering to attend an educational institution is one that permeates the entire history of adult education from its beginning to this very day. The students are not required to come; they simply return to the classroom because they realize the benefits of a continued educational experience.

With the realization that education is not terminal but lifelong, the term "continuing education" began to be used more and more frequently to describe a continued pattern of education. However, since much of the work done in continuing education was done with adults, the terms were fused, both in the literature and in usage. Verner states that "adult education provides access to learning through which an individual achieves continuous growth toward maturity in all phases of life".[6]

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[5]Knowles, Malcolm S., The Adult Education Movement in the United States (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1962) pp. 36-38.

[6]Verner, Coolie and Alan Booth, Adult Education (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1964) p. 60.

In its second report, The President's Committee of Education Beyond the High School states that one of the major educational complexes that have evolved is "a great variety of programs of continuing education under the broad title of 'adult education'."[7] Thornton states that the term "adult education", formerly used to describe the part-time courses offered by the community college, has become less appropriate as both the nature of the part-time student and the scope of the offerings change, and suggests that the term "continuing education" is more descriptive.[8] Therefore, this writer will bow to logic and ally himself with Thornton, using the term "continuing education" to include adult education, rather than as a separate function.

Although Continuing Education is generally acknowledged to include adult education, the definition is far from complete. "Continuing education" has different meanings at different institutions. At some, it means any program conducted after the regular eight-to-five classroom schedule. At others, it means any non-credit program, no matter when it is conducted. At others, it means any program not listed in the institution's catalog. At still others, it includes all students taking less than a full course load.

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[7] Thornton, James W. Jr., The Community Junior College (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960) pp. 239-240.

[8] Ibid., pp. 66-67.

The definition of "community services" is equally vague, and usually refers to anything left over after "continuing education" is defined. There is so much overlapping of function between continuing education and community service that it seems only logical to include them in the same organizational slot in the community college administration. Medsker states that "the term 'community service' has come to denote generally the various special services which an educational institution may provide for its community. There is obviously a close relationship between adult education and many of these special services. In fact, adult education may be classified as one type of community service."[9] For the purposes of this paper, however, "community services" will be considered to be one aspect of "continuing education". Support for this designation can be found in a survey conducted in 1968 of all institutions on the AAJC mailing list. It was found that a community service program is well established in nine out of ten community colleges in the United States, and its director is most likely to be the Adult Education Director of the Institution.[10]

Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, Continuing Education/Adult Education/Community Services will be considered as a single function referred to as "Continuing Education", with one director, and will include course offerings and services, both formal and informal in nature, made available to the part-time student whose primary orientation is not toward a degree.

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[9]Medsker, Leland L., The Junior College, Progress and Prospect (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960) p. 78.

[10]Shaw, Nathan C., editor, "Community Service Program Administration in Junior Colleges", Community Services Forum, Vol. 1, No. 2. February 1969.

ALPHA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

One of the best ways to clearly describe the continuing education function at a community college is to use an example. In this paper, the example will be fictional - a newly-developed institution called "Alpha Community College". It is necessary to assume some basic parameters for Alpha at the time it decided to initiate the continuing education function as part of its program.

1. Alpha Community College is a public two-year institution, located in a middle-Atlantic state, in an urban area, with a service-area population of approximately 175,000.

2. Alpha Community College has been in operation for 24 months.

3. Alpha Community College has an enrollment of 1,100 full-time students, divided approximately equally between vocational and transfer programs.

4. Alpha Community College has, during its period of operation, received requests from various community groups and individuals for programs of a continuing education nature, but has been unable to fulfill them because of the lack of an appropriate organization for continuing education.

5. Alpha Community College is the only "collegiate" type institution within its service area; that is, the only "continuing education" type activity being offered in the service area is being offered by the local high schools, Y.M.C.A., and other similar organizations.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AT ALPHA COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Alpha Community College was established by a local sponsor under a state law permitting the initiation of public community colleges as comprehensive institutions. The enabling act defines community colleges in this state as "those institutions which provide two-year, post-secondary, college parallel, terminal-general, terminal-technical, out-of-school-youth or -adult education programs, or any combination of these".

The board of trustees of Alpha Community College, desiring to provide the broadest possible service to the people of the community, unanimously passed a resolution instructing the president to establish a continuing education division.[11]

The president, upon review of qualified applicants, appointed a Dean of Continuing Education. The president then convened a "Council of Deans" to develop the philosophy of continuing education which will be employed at Alpha Community College and to define a method of implementation. The Council of Deans included the Dean of each division of the college:

1. Dean of Academic Programs
2. Dean of Occupational Programs
3. Dean of Student Personnel Services
4. Dean of Business and Financial Affairs
5. The newly-appointed Dean of Continuing Education.

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[11] As in most two-year colleges, the first programs to be organized were the college-parallel and vocational-occupational programs. The writer does not necessarily agree with this, feeling that continuing education should experience concurrent development with the other major functions of the institution.

The Council agreed on the previously stated definition of Continuing Education: Continuing Education will include course offerings and services, both formal and informal in nature, made available to the part-time student whose primary orientation is not toward a degree.

The most important decision of the Council of Deans was the establishment of a Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education, to be chaired by the Dean of Continuing Education. This Coordinating Committee is to be the major vehicle for the implementation of continuing education at Alpha Community College, and will include as members, one representative from each division, appointed by the dean of that division. The representatives on this committee should have the rank of Assistant Dean of their respective divisions. In the case of Alpha, it was felt that those holding administrative rank could by virtue of their position exert more effective leadership and insure a total commitment on the part of the department heads and faculty members. The Dean of Continuing Education was given the authority to interview and recommend for employment the necessary staff and secretarial personnel to perform the required functions of this division.

A number of procedural matters were determined by the "Council of Deans". It was agreed that:

1. The Coordinating Committee will determine the responsibility of each division of the college for a particular course or program, and assign instructional responsibility to the appropriate department, which will then be expected to provide or approve the instruction, the proper supervision of instruction, and the conditions under which it is offered.

2. Administrative arrangements for all Continuing Education programs will be the responsibility of the Continuing Education staff, and will be coordinated by the Dean of Continuing Education.

3. The Coordinating Committee shall meet every two weeks, or more often at the request of the chairman.

4. Agenda items will be distributed to Coordinating Committee members two working days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting. The agenda will be distributed through the Continuing Education office. Under unusual circumstances, this two-day period can be waived.

5. General Course Offerings of the Continuing Education Division will be scheduled for the evening hours following the regular college day, in order to enable the majority of those living in the service area to take advantage of the courses, as well as to make more efficient use of the college facilities. Exceptions may be made for special program requests, with the approval of the Coordinating Committee.

6. Minutes of each meeting of the Coordinating Committee will be distributed to (in addition to members of the Committee):

    a. President - Board of Trustees
    b. President of Alpha Community College
    c. Dean of each division
    d. Each Department Head
    e. Continuing Education Staff members.

7. To provide appropriate evaluation procedures for the Continuing Education programs, an Ad Hoc Committee, representative of all divisions of the college, will be formed to develop such procedures. This Ad Hoc Committee will be coordinated through the Continuing Education office.

8. The Dean of Continuing Education will compile an annual report of all Continuing Education activity for the preceeding year.

Figure I, page II, shows a simplified organization chart for Alpha Community College. Functions below the division level, and many staff functions have been omitted from this chart. Rather than attempt to explain the functioning of the Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education, the writer has elected to demonstrate this through hypothetical examples which are representative of the typical situation which would face an institution with a Continuing Education function.

EXAMPLE NUMBER I - GENERAL COURSE OFFERINGS:

Admittedly, this is a difficult stage. The Dean of a newly-organized Continuing Education division is now confronted with the task of determining what courses of a "general" nature should be offered for the potential continuing education student. He does not have last year's Continuing Education enrollment patterns to guide him, but he can take certain steps to make his judgement and "guesswork" more accurate.

1. He meets with the president to review requests that have been made to the college from those living in the service area, both individuals and groups, which the college has been unable to fulfill.

2. He meets with other adult education leaders in the community (Y.M.C.A., local high schools, etc.) to review with them requests which they have been unable to meet because the requests have been for programs in the area of higher education. (This also gives him the opportunity to coordinate his programs with those existing programs and avoid duplication.)

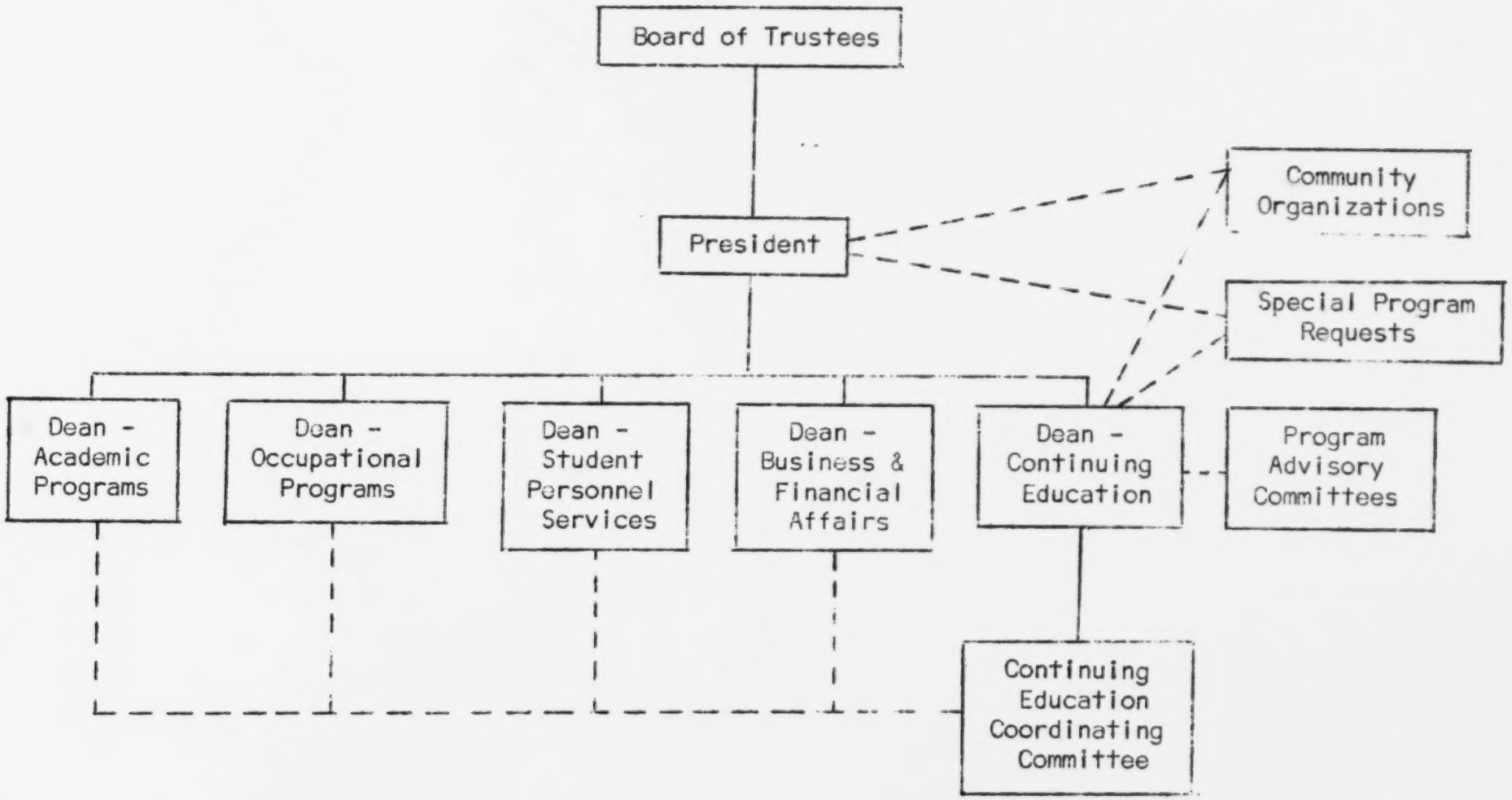

FIGURE 1

ORGANIZATION CHART FOR ALPHA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

3. He contacts personnel offices of the local industries to gain insight into needs of their employees with regard to collegiate level courses and programs.

4. He visits the Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturer's Association, and labor organizations to discuss the educational needs of these organizations.

5. He solicits opinions from the faculty and members of the Board of Trustees as to what they believe the course offerings in Continuing Education should be.

These steps should not be considered the only avenues for developing a basic group of course offerings; situations vary from community to community, but these sources of information are common to all. It is vitally important that these initial contacts should not be considered "one-shot" contacts, but should be nurtured and maintained so that the college remains constantly responsive to the needs of its service area.

At the regularly scheduled meeting of the Coordinating Committee, the potential course offerings are submitted and reviewed, with the object of determining if they are, in fact, within the scope of operation of Alpha Community College.

It was determined that the english course would be the responsibility of the Division of Academic Programs, that the drafting course would be the responsibility of the Division of Occupational Programs, and that the Division of Student Personnel Services would make counseling available for any students who wish to take advantage of this service. This means that the appropriate

department within the division assigned responsibility for a course will be responsible for providing a course outline, providing an instructor from the full-time faculty, or if one is not available, approving the credentials of an adjunct instructor, and determining course admission requirements, if any.

The possible variety of course offerings is infinite, but all courses would be handled as described above, with the appropriate instructional division assuming responsibility for courses in its area, and the service divisions (Student Personnel Services, Business and Financial Affairs) providing services as needed. All administrative responsibility will rest with the Division of Continuing Education.

EXAMPLE NUMBER 2 - SOCIOLOGY FOR NURSES:

A group of fifteen nurses from the local hospital contact the President of Alpha Community College about a course in Sociology I, a regular offering of Alpha Community College, and also required for a B.S. in Nursing at the state university. However, they cannot attend at the regularly scheduled time and place, and would instead like the course to be held one evening a week at a classroom in the nurses' home.

This is obviously Continuing Education business, and quite routine.

The president refers this request to the Dean of Continuing Education who places this item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

ACTION OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

The responsibilities of each division are determined to be as follows:

1. Academic Programs - No program approval is needed, since this is a regular offering of the college. The representative of this division will refer the request to the department responsible for Sociology, and ask that they review faculty load to see if a full-time instructor can be assigned. If not, the department will review applications of instructors from outside the community college and approve those qualified. If no qualified application is on file, the Continuing Education staff will help to locate an instructor.

2. Occupational Programs - none

3. Student Personnel Services - This division need only be aware of the course offering, so that guidance and counseling services can be made available to these students if necessary.

4. Business and Financial Affairs - The hiring of an outside instructor may require some budget adjustments. This division must have a representative at registration to collect fees, and arrange for ordering and sale of the recommended text.

EXAMPLE NUMBER 3 - INDUSTRIAL DRAFTING:

A local industry requests company-sponsored and supported courses in drafting for 60 of its employees. The industry has reviewed the drafting courses listed as General Course Offerings by the Continuing Education Division and feels that they will be satisfactory to meet their needs, requesting only that its employees be assigned at the proper entry level and that a contract be drawn up to cover all fees and supplies.

ACTION OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

The responsibilities of each division are determined to be as follows:

1. Academic Programs - none

2. Occupational Programs - none. Occupational Programs exercised its responsibility when these courses were approved as General Course Offerings.

3. Student Personnel Services - Since a large group with varying experience and educational backgrounds is involved, testing will be required to assign students at the proper entry level.

4. Business and Financial Affairs - This division will be responsible for drawing up the necessary contractual agreement with the industry to cover fees, supplies, etc.

EXAMPLE NUMBER 4 - INFORMAL COURSE IN REAL ESTATE:

The local board of realtors approaches the college to request a program that would up-grade local real estate salesmen. Because of the special nature of the program, the Dean of Continuing Education requests that the board of realtors select a special "Program Advisory Committee" to determine course content, since no program of this nature is found in the regular college catalog. Accompanying the Dean of Continuing Education at this advisory committee meeting will be a representative from the Department of Business and Commerce in the Division of Academic Programs. The advisory committee can also identify potential lecturers, subject to the approval of the Department of Business and Commerce. After the background work has been done with the Program Advisory Committee, and all pertinent data gathered, the Dean of Continuing Education places this item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

ACTION OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

The responsibilities of each division are determined to be as follows:

1. Academic Programs - Approval is necessary for both course content and the instructor.
2. Occupational Programs - none

3. Student Personnel Services - none

4. Business and Financial Affairs - This division is responsible for determining the fee to be charged for each participant, collection of fees at registration, and approval of the instructor's compensation.

EXAMPLE NUMBER 5 - PROGRAM FOR LAWYERS:

The local Bar Association requests a series of formalized educational meetings to help keep its members abreast of changes in their field. This program is clearly beyond the scope of competence of a two-year college, but it is a legitimate request from an organization within Alpha Community College's service area, and according to the philosophy of Continuing Education at Alpha, every attempt must be made to satisfy such requests. Therefore, the Dean of Continuing Education approaches the Law School at the state university, some distance away, and suggests that the Law School take academic responsibility for the program, with the Community College assuming administrative responsibility. This, in effect, is the establishment of a "consortium" between the Community College and another institution.

ACTION BY THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

All divisions unanimously approve the college entering into this agreement.

The president, as an ex officio member of this committee, has been advised of the arrangements and also approves. The responsibilities of each division are determined to be as follows:

1. Academic Programs - none
2. Occupational Programs - none
3. Student Personnel Services - none
4. Business and Financial Affairs - This division will be responsible for determining the fee to be charged the local bar association. This fee must cover compensation and travel expenses for guest lecturers, compensation to the law school for costs incurred in the development and supervision of the program, and costs incurred by the community college for the administration of the program.

SUMMARY:

We have assumed that this progress at Alpha was made without incident. In fact, many of the most vocal detractors of Continuing Education are found within the institution operating or considering a Continuing Education function. It is unfortunate that this occurs, because only with complete support and a feeling of responsibility on the part of all members of the professional staff can Continuing Education meet its goals. These detractors, however, have legitimate concerns that must be carefully considered by the person responsible for Continuing Education.

The Continuing Education function may be an unwelcome addition to the community college family, and its reception less than warm because its goals and scope of operation are often misunderstood by members of the college family. Those involved in Continuing Education can find themselves defending the validity of a collegiate institution offering such courses as cake baking, or a ten-week discussion course in modern painting. This type of objection can be eliminated by making it quite clear that Continuing Education must be responsive to the needs of the community, and not patterned to conform to some pre-conceived idea of what a college should be.

Some skeptics feel that the use of part-time faculty necessarily employed to teach certain Continuing Education programs will erode the rigid standards applied to the regular full-time teaching staff. This simply need not happen if the instructional departments are given authority to approve part-time instructors.

Others object to the Continuing Education Division employing the so-called "Robin Hood" method of financing - extracting from the "able-to-pay" program participants to provide for the "hard-to-finance" program participants. The method of financing Continuing Education is a policy decision to be defined by the President and the Board of Trustees, and should be clearly understood by all concerned.

There may be some question about the Director of Continuing Education having the rank of Dean and reporting directly to the President. If a community college is to be truly comprehensive, the Continuing Education function must be given equal weight with the other programs offered by the college, even though the students served by Continuing Education will have different educational goals than the full-time degree or occupation oriented student. Continuing Education will reach a much greater proportion of the service area population than will any of the other programs of the college, and will have a greater impact on the feeling of the community for its institution.

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